



Gordon McDermott
President and Owner of Auracom International, Inc

Whether a seasoned or a new member, you may not really know HOW the Association of Language Companies, LLC, got its start. This month's spotlight, featuring **Gordon McDermott**, owner of Auracom International, Inc., has a twofold purpose. We get to know Gordon, but we learn also about how a small group of LSC owners birthed the ALC! How a much needed, and now much-respected, organization recognized the need to focus on the business of language in the USA, for the sake of its clients and the language industry.

But first, to get to know Gordon for those of you who haven't had the pleasure. Gordon transitioned from the shipping industry to the language industry in 1997 when he joined Legal Link Translations, Inc. and its founder Josée Daigneault. Not a translator, but being bilingual in French, gave Gordon insight into the skillset that good linguists must have. Widening the scope of the company, and with a new name, Auracom International, Inc., headquartered in New Jersey, Gordon decided to focus on the business of language: Professionalism, Quality, and Excellent Customer Service. In Gordon's words "That sounds normal today, but it wasn't back in the late 90's/early 2000's."

"The linguists were undervalued and frustrated. The industry was suffering from a "commoditization" approach and missing out on the benefits of "value-added" concepts. The linguists had incredible resources to help them, and the end clients were well connected within their industry verticals. Missing in all of this was a robust **connection** focusing on the business of language."

It happened over several days at an American Translators' Association (ATA), Translation Company Division (TCD), conference! Several people held a private meeting to explore how they might improve this "connection". More were recruited. Gordon recalls that he, close colleague Bill Graeper along with Robin Brown, Steve Iverson, Arlene Jullie, and her husband Joe, Suzanne Robinson, Richard Antoine, Steven Kahaner, Georgia Roeming, and Monique-Paule Tubb were ready to get the show going, contributing their own time and money. That was in 2001, and the rest is history.

Gordon added: "My personal goals for the association were to create a comfortable environment where everyone can learn from outside resources as well as each other and develop mutually beneficial partnerships. This comes from truly getting to know people and developing honest relationships.

Amazingly, I had to be reminded of this a few years ago. Kristin Quinlan and I were talking about the upcoming ALC conference. I said that I was too busy to go to the conference and that it would not be a problem as I had already covered a lot on the agenda. I don't remember her exact words, but Kristin said something like "Duh.... Gordon, it is all about the people, the connections and partnerships, this is why you are a founding member." I booked my flight after we hung up and attended one of the most productive conferences ever."

Gordon has continued to provide his influence, professionalism, and service to the ALC and looks forward to the Unconference in Puerto Rico in January! "It will be great to warm up and take a little break from my winter passion, ski instructing. See you in Puerto Rico! Or come and join me on the mountain in Stowe, Vermont."

Note: for more information on the birth of the ALC, see <https://www.alcus.org/page/ALCFounders2>

